

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCEM-02 INT-08 NEA-10 EUR-25 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14

AID-20 EB-11 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02

COME-00 NIC-01 IGA-02 SY-10 USSS-00 SCS-03 SCA-01

OC-06 CCO-00 PC-04 CU-04 OPR-02 SSO-00 DRC-01 /254 W
----- 015239

R 302305Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5781

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4494

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, HO

SUBJ: DEVELOPMENTS RE ENERGY SHORTAGE

1. ENERGY CRISIS IN HONDURAS IS APPARENTLY MUCH WORSE THAN IN OTHER CA COUNTRIES. IT IS TRANSLATING ITSELF INTO SOME ANTI-AMERICAN ILL-WILL AGAINST OIL COMPANIES, PARTICULARLY TEXACO, AND AGAINST EMBASSY.

2. WE HEARD RUMOR NIGHT OF NOV 28 THAT WALLACE MCDONALD, TEXACO MANAGER, HAD BEEN ORDERED TO LEAVE COUNTRY WITHIN 24 HOURS "FOR HAVING INSULTED MINISTER." THIS WAS UNTRUE, BUT ACCORDING TO TIEMPO OF TODAY TEXACO OFFICES ARE UNDER HEAVY POLICEGUARD BECAUSE OF MANY THREATS MCDONALD HAS RECEIVED.

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3. EXTREME EXAMPLE OF ANTI-AMERICANISM APPEARED IN

TODAY'S CRONISTA WITH VICIOUS STORY THAT CERTAIN "POWERFUL EMBASSY" HAD DECREED PETROL SHORTAGE IN "CONSPIRACY AGAINST HONDURAS." AMONG FABRICATED DETAILS ARE ALLEGATION THAT EMBASSY CALLED ALL GASOLINE STATION OPERATORS IN AND TOLD THEM TO WHOM THEY COULD GIVE PETROL AND WHO WAS TO BE DENIED. EMBASSY "INSTRUCTED" THEM TO SELL NO FUEL TO HONDURAN ARMED FORCES. SINISTER MOTIVE OF MANEUVER IS OBVIOUS, SINCE EL SALVADOR IS "IN GAS UP TO ITS ELBOWS."

4. IN TODAY.S ANNOUNCED MEASURES TO COMBAT CRISIS, GOH EXHORTED DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO JOIN NATIONAL EFFORT TO SAVE GAS. IN TERMS OF PETROL CONSUMPTION, PHRASE "DIPLOMATIC CORPS" IS CONSIDERED EUPHEMISM FOR THIS EMBASSY. WE DO NOT KNOW IF THIS WILL TRANSLATE ITSELF INTO CUT IN EMBASSY "QUOTA" EVENTUALLY, BUT ESSO THIS MORNING AGAIN CONFIRMED THEY PLAN TO GIVE US FULL 1972 FIGURE WHICH FOR DECEMBER WILL AMOUNT TO AROUND 2500 (TWO FIVE ZERO ZERO) GALLONS PER WEEK.

5. EMBASSY'S ISOLATED ACCESS TO PETROL HAS NOT SAVED US FROM GROWING PROBLEMS.

(A) FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REASONS WE LAST WEEK CONSOLIDATED ALL ESSO DELIVERIES UNDER OUR QUOTA INTO SINGLE GAS STATION. RESENTMENTS AT OUR ONGOING PROVISIONING WHILE HONDURAN CARS GO EMPTY HAVE HOWEVER GREATLY INCREASED. ONE STATION OPERATOR YESTERDAY ASKED EMBASSY WIFE NOT TO COME INTO HIS STATION EVEN FOR OTHER SERVICES SINCE POPULAR ANIMUS WAS SO SHARP HE FEARED INCIDENT. THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER AWKWARD OCCURRENCES.

(B) EMBASSY ACCORDINGLY HAS NOW ASKED ESSO TO DELIVER OUR QUOTA INTO EMBASSY MOTOR POOL, AND WILL TANK ALL PRIVATE VEHICLES THERE BEGINNING DECEMBER 3.

(C) NO PETROL IS AVAILABLE TO US ANYWHERE OUTSIDE TEGUCIGALPA. THIS IS SERIOUSLY HITTING PEACE CORPS. EMBASSY VEHICLES MAKING OUT-OF-TOWN TRIPS HAVE TO CARRY FULL ROUND-TRIP RESERVES IN JERRY CANS.
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(D) DATT WAS YESTERDAY ADVISED THAT HE WILL BE LIMITED TO 700 GALLONS AVGAS FOR DECEMBER. HIS AIRCRAFT CAPACITY IS 600 GALLONS PER FILLING. (THERE ARE INDICATIONS HE CAN GET GAS IN GUATEMALA AND NICARAGUA.)

(E) THERE IS IMMINENT DANGER OF CLOSING OF AMERICAN

SCHOOL-, SINCE BUSES ARE BEING LIMITED ON GAS, AND
800 OF 900 PUPILS ARE BUSSED.

(F) EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEES ARE HARD HIT AND AS
RESULT EMBASSY HAS DECIDED TO GO ON SINGLE WORK SHIFT
AS OF DEC 3 FROM 0800 TO 1630 HOURS, GIVING ALL
EMPLOYEES, US AND LOCAL, THIRTY MINUTES FOR LUNCH
WHICH SHOULD NOW BE TAKEN IN EMBASSY.

6. SINCE THE "RATIONING" OF GAS IS LEFT UP TO
INDIVIDUAL FILLING STATION OWNERS, IT IS LARGELY
INEFFECTUAL. WHAT HAPPENED IN NOVEMBER WITH 10-20
PERCENT CUT WAS THAT MOST STATIONS WENT DRY SEVERAL
DAYS BEFORE END OF MONTH. WITH 35 PERCENT CUT IN
DECEMBER, THERE IS REAL DANGER THAT ALL GAS AND
DIESEL WILL BE LARGELY USED UP BY DEC 20. OBVIOUSLY
THIS COULD LEAD TO MOST SERIOUS NATIONAL REPERCUSSIONS,
E.G. FOOD STOCKS.

7. ANY FOREIGN SERVICE TRAVELERS IN PRIVATE CARS
SHOULD CARRY ENOUGH PETROL TO GET THROUGH HONDURAS,
OR AT LEAST TO REACH EMBASSY. WE CANNOT HELP TOURISTS
AND THEY SHOULD BE ADVISED OF UNAVAILABILITY OF
GAS IN COUNTRY.
SANCHEZ

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